

I work at Gaylord Hospital in Wallingford and have been employed here for almost 25 years. Gaylord has a remarkable history, having started as a tuberculosis sanitarium in 1902. Currently, we treat some of the most ill patients who need our services desperately, i.e. patients with spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, stroke, medically complex issues, on ventilators, etc. As a free-standing, non-profit hospital, we admit patients from all Connecticut hospitals and from neighboring states. We are an integral part of the Wallingford community and employ 900 people, most of whom come from Wallingford and the neighboring communities.

Recently, we have learned that Governor Malloy's state budget proposal would allow cities and towns to tax non-profit hospitals and specialty hospitals starting July 1. I find this to be appalling. Taxing the property of our non-profit hospital would create a significant financial burden for Gaylord. As a non-profit, we are constantly in a state of financial stress. We do have a lot of property and if the town were to tax it, the result would be devastating.

Personally, as an employee, I feel that Gaylord would need to pass along some of this burden to its employees in the form of increasing the employee's contribution to our insurance coverage, or decreasing raises. This, then, also puts a financial hardship on the employees of the non-profit hospitals. The cost to patients with private insurance would increase as well, placing a financial burden on them.

I don't understand why the Governor feels this is a viable solution for towns to get more tax money. While I have many issues with the way the budget seems to work in Connecticut, I think this property tax on non-profit hospitals is the most preposterous idea yet.

I urge you all to fight this proposal. Ultimately, you will be keeping this place where magic happens for our patients, where employees are committed to providing stellar medical care, and where the community can depend on us to be here for another 115 years!